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Our Man in the Kremlin

How Penkovsky Was Seized

Aided in Flight of English Associate

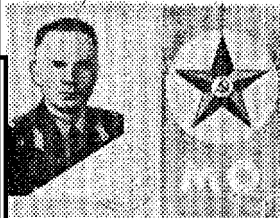
By Frank Gibney
Eleventh in a Series

Early in the morning of July 6, 1962, Col. Penkovsky drove to Sheremetevo airport and met Greville Wynne in the passenger waiting room.

Using his Party card to overawe customs and security personnel, Penkovsky changed Wynne's tickets, rushed him through the departure formalities, and saw him aboard the first west-bound plane, an S.A.S. flight headed for Copenhagen.

Coming on the heels of their surveillance at the Peking Restaurant the night before, the hasty departure must inevitably have deepened the suspicions of the State Security Police. But Penkovsky knew that Wynne was in some danger.

Heedless of his own risk,



He wanted at all costs to assure Wynne's safety.

Over the next three months the Colonel succeeded in getting several packets of information out to his Western contacts, mostly through the use of "dead drops" and prearranged messages.

On Sept. 5, he brought some film to an American Embassy reception, but he could find no safe opportunity to transfer it.

The next day he tried to establish contact with one of his British sources. That effort, too, proved fruitless. The net had tightened.

On Oct. 22, according to official Soviet record, Col. Oleg Penkovsky was arrested by representatives of the State Security, in Moscow, and taken to Lubianka Prison. On Nov. 2, Greville Wynne was kidnaped by State Security Police in Budapest, where he had gone to make preliminary arrangements for a mobile trade exhibition in Eastern Europe. He was flown to Moscow in an aircraft commanded by a State Security general and thrown into Lubianka for interrogation.

The "interrogation" of Penkovsky and Wynne was to last fully six months.

What finally betrayed Penkovsky? It was certainly not the result of a long cat-and-mouse game played by an all-seeing State Security. Penkovsky's high rank and access to the Kremlin's secrets made him far too dangerous an enemy for the Soviet high command to temporize with, in an effort to learn more about his contacts, sources, etc.

The minute his spying was discovered, it would have to be stopped. So the discovery must have been made just before his arrest.

The State Security's original discovery that Penkovsky's father was a White Russian officer—a damaging item in any Soviet file—undoubtedly started an investigation. In the course of the investigation, the State Security Police noticed Penkovsky's frequent meetings with foreigners.

Even though Penkovsky's position in Intelligence permitted such associations, there must have been a great many dangerous foreign contact reports in his security file.

The expensive gifts he brought back from the West, for high army and Party officials, also aroused some suspicion. Wynne still believes that Penkovsky was first suspected of black-marketeering—not an unusual crime among Soviet officials.

There was another important factor. Through the spring and summer of 1962, as tension with the West was built up by Khrushchev, the State Security had been ordered to tighten its surveillance on all foreigners—and Russians who associated with them.

Ironically, the same "collision course for war" which Penkovsky warned about was responsible for the intensified surveillance that brought on his arrest.

At some point the State Security searched Penkovsky's apartment. Once the searchers found the secret drawer with Penkovsky's espionage apparatus—cameras, radio and instructions for Western contacts—the Colonel's doom was sealed.

Could Penkovsky have saved himself before that time? Probably yes. In July, for instance, after Wynne's return to London, Penkovsky could have sent a message to London announcing that he was breaking off communication, temporarily cut his Western contacts and, above all, destroyed the incriminating materials in his desk drawer.

He did not do this precisely because he thought it necessary, to the very last, to continue his warnings about Khrushchev's political "adventurism" and its danger to the world.

In the following excerpt from the Papers, one of the last he wrote, he discusses the Soviet nuclear menace—and Khrushchev's disre-

Continued

gard of any test ban in 1961 and 1962.

(We must remember that Khrushchev agreed to a test ban in 1963, only after the U. S. faced him down in Cuba.)

By Oleg Penkovsky

Many of our nuclear explosions (tests) have been conducted in the central part of the U.S.S.R., mostly in Kazakhstan. Some of the smaller tests were not noticed at all and were not recorded by the Western states.

The large nuclear explosions are reported by Tass and the Soviet press, but nothing is ever said about the smaller ones. At the General Staff we sometimes know of tests being conducted on a certain type of nuclear weapon, and we wait to see what Tass will say about this. If Tass keeps silent, then we keep silent, too.

Tests of various new types of nuclear weapons are conducted daily. Nuclear test explosions take place more often than reported by Tass or the Soviet press. All this talk about the Soviet Union advocating the prohibition of nuclear tests is nothing but lies.

Khrushchev will fire anyone who mentions complete suspension of nuclear tests. He is not ready for it.

He will sign an agreement prohibiting nuclear tests only after he becomes convinced that the U.S.S.R. is ahead of the United States in the use of nuclear energy for military purposes. The negotiations could last another ten years without any results.

There is a shortage of atomic raw materials needed for the atom bombs and missiles with nuclear warheads. Almost all the ore containing uranium comes to the Soviet Union from Czechoslovakia.

Recently some uranium ore deposits have been found in China, but they are very insignificant. Soviet monazite sands and ore deposits are not particularly rich either in elements necessary for atomic energy.

In view of this shortage of atomic raw materials, it is small wonder that our government is so interested in establishing Soviet control in the Congo. The largest uranium deposits are in the Congo.

When Lumumba was temporarily in power in the Congo, the Soviets sent 23 plane-loads of officers (including generals) there via Egypt and Sudan. The aircraft were of the IL-14 and IL-18 types; heavier types could not land on the Sudanese airfield, and other countries would not give permission for the Soviet aircraft to land for refueling.

A good friend of mine, Maj. Aleksey Guryev, was the first one to fly to the Congo with the Soviet generals. The primary task of this mission was to establish Soviet control over the uranium ore in the Congo.

On Sept. 8, 1961, there was a regular experimental atomic

explosion of a 16-megaton bomb. This was the first test explosion of a bomb of such force in the Soviet Union. An R-12 missile was used in this test. The missile was launched from the base at Kapustin Yar. Varentsov was present when the missile was launched.

Later, when a 50-megaton bomb was tested, to everybody's surprise the explosion's actual force equaled that of 80 megatons. Such great force was not expected.

It was believed that some unforeseen chemical changes in the charge must have taken place after it was prepared. It is now thought that such a bomb with a calculated force of 100 megatons may actually produce an explosion equaling that of 150 or 160 megatons.

Why did Khrushchev unexpectedly begin to conduct new nuclear tests?

(The Soviets resumed nuclear testing on Sept. 1, 1961. They continued the practice until the nuclear test-ban treaty of 1963.)

All nuclear tests have had and some still have two phases. The first phase deals with the explosive force in TNT equivalents.

In these tests the bombs were dropped from aircraft or from special masts. The second phase tests nuclear payloads lifted by missiles.

The present tests are almost exclusively on the second

phase type. Almost all of them are conducted with missiles.

Why is Khrushchev pushing these nuclear tests? Why is he unwilling to sign the agreement forbidding nuclear weapons tests? Because most of our missiles have not even passed the necessary tests, let alone of missile production, as regards quality and there have been many instances of missiles and satellites exploding in the air or disappearing completely.

But Khrushchev persistently does everything possible to improve missile weapons. He wants to seize the initiative and to show the West that he is ahead in the field of missile production,

as regards quality as well as quantity.

Khrushchev and our scientists are still quite far from being able to prove such a superiority; but they are working hard to improve all types of missile weapons.

Gen. Kupin says there are insufficient defense facilities in case of war, particularly as regards defense against radioactive substances.

Although we tell our people working in defense plants that everything is under control and that there is no danger of contamination, they are still afraid.

Many become ill, after working for six months or a year. Even our nuclear-

powered icebreaker Lenin is a floating deathtrap because of its badly designed valves which allow radioactive leakage.

ED. NOTE: On Aug. 25, 1962, Col. Penkovsky added the following personal note to the Papers. It was one of the few entries with a date affixed. It was the last thing ever received from him.

I have already grown used to the fact that I note periodically some degree of surveillance and control over my movements. The "neighbors" continue to study me. There is some reason for this KGB activity. I confuse and lose myself in guesses and suppositions. I am very far from exaggerat-

ing the dangers. Still, I am an optimist and I try to evaluate the situation objectively.

I am not disappointed in my life or my work. The most important thing is that I remain full of strength and desire to continue this work. To tell the truth about the Soviet system—it is the goal of my life. And if I succeed in contributing my little bricks to this great cause, there can be no greater satisfaction.

Condensed from the forthcoming book, "The Penkovsky Papers," © 1965, Doubleday & Co., Inc.

FRIDAY: The arrest and trial of Col. Penkovsky and Greville Wynne, after six months' interrogation in the Lubianka cellars.